

REMARKS

Claims 15 to 19 and 21 to 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,625,657 to Gallacher (hereinafter "Gallacher"). Claim 20 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Gallacher.

Reconsideration of the application based on the following remarks is respectfully requested.

35 U.S.C. §102 Rejections

Claims 15 to 19 and 21 to 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Gallacher.

Gallacher discloses a method for repairing a nuclear fuel rod assembly with damaged fuel rod and/or a damaged spacer. The "nuclear fuel rod assembly [has] a plurality of spaced apart grid spacers comprising an arrangement of a first plurality of grid strips intersecting each other to form a first plurality of spacer cells through which fuel rods extend and for maintaining the fuel rods in a predetermined position within said assembly, an upper tie plate located at the top of said assembly, and a grid spacer having a damaged spacer cell." (Col. 2, lines 29 to 36).

Claim 15 recites "[a] nuclear fuel assembly comprising:
a group of nuclear fuel rods and a support skeleton, the assembly comprising:

two nozzles;

guide tubes interconnecting the nozzles; and

spacer grids secured to the guide tubes and serving to hold the rods;

the nuclear fuels rods extending along a longitudinal direction and being disposed in a substantially regular array;

the assembly including at least one support skeleton reinforcing device disposed between two successive spacer grids and secured to the guide tubes, and the reinforcing device being disposed inside the group of rods and presenting a transverse extent that is less than the transverse extent of the array of rods."

The Office Action is in clear error in asserting in section 3 on page 2 that in Gallacher the “guide tubes are secured to the fuel rods and the reinforcing device is secured to the fuel rods; thus the guide tubes are indirectly secured to the reinforcing device.” The word “secured” means “firmly fixed” or “fastened.” (See attached copy of definitions for the word secure from thefreedictionary.com, on page 1, verb definition 2; page 2, verb definition 4). The guide tubes 14 are not firmly fixed or fastened to the fuel rods 16 of Gallacher since, as acknowledged in the Office Action, sliding is permitted between the fuel rods 16 and the spacer grids 18 of Gallacher. “Springs incorporated in the spacer grids are most frequently used to permit some sliding of the fuel rods with respect to the spacer grids. In some of the designs, the spacer grid is free to move axially a small amount to accommodate minor changes in the axial length of the fuel rods during irradiation.” (Col. 1, lines 46 to 53) (emphasis added).

Furthermore, even if the guide tubes were secured to the fuel rods, which they are not, the fuel rods of Gallacher are not even secured to the reinforcing device as asserted in the Office Action.

Therefore, since Gallacher does not disclose a support skeleton reinforcing device that is secured to guide tubes, it does not teach all limitations of claim 15, Gallacher cannot anticipate claim 15.

Withdrawal of the rejection of independent claim 15 and claims 16 to 19 and 21 to 28, dependent on claim 15, under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) is respectfully requested.

35 U.S.C. §103 Rejections

Claim 20 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Gallacher.

Claim 20 is dependent on claim 19, which in turn is dependent on claim 15. Thus, in light of the discussion above regarding independent claim 15, withdrawal of the rejection of claim 20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

It is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance and applicants respectfully request such action.

If any additional fees are deemed to be due at this time, the Assistant Commissioner is authorized to charge payment of the same to Deposit Account No. 50-0552.

Respectfully submitted,

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se·cure (sĭ-kyŭŕ')
adj. **se·cure·r**, **se·cure·st**

1. Free from danger or attack: *a secure fortress.*
2. Free from risk of loss; safe: *Her papers were secure in the vault.*
3. Free from the risk of being intercepted or listened to by unauthorized persons: *Only one telephone line in the embassy was secure.*
4. Free from fear, anxiety, or doubt.
5.
 - a. Not likely to fail or give way; stable: *a secure stepladder.*
 - b. Firmly fastened: *a secure lock.*
6. Reliable; dependable: *secure investments.*
7. Assured; certain: *With three goals in the first period they had a secure victory, but somehow they lost.*
8. Archaic Careless or overconfident.

tr.v. **se·cured**, **se·cur·ing**, **se·cures**

1. To guard from danger or risk of loss: *The troops secured the area before the civilians were allowed to return.*
2. To make firm or tight; fasten. See Synonyms at [fasten](#).
3. To make certain; ensure: *The speaker could not secure the goodwill of the audience.*
4.
 - a. To guarantee payment of (a loan, for example).
 - b. To guarantee payment to (a creditor).
5. To get possession of; acquire: *secured a job.*
6. To capture or confine: *They secured the suspect in the squad car.*
7. To bring about; effect: *secured release of the hostages.*
8. To protect or ensure the privacy or secrecy of (a

telephone line, for example).

[Latin *sēcūrus* : *sē-*, *without*; see *s (w) e-* in Indo-European roots + *cūra*, *care*; see *cure*.]

- se·cur'a·ble *adj.*
- se·cure'ly *adv.*
- se·cure'ment *n.*
- se·cure'ness *n.*
- se·cur'er *n.*

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secure

Adjective

- 1. free from danger or damage
- 2. free from fear, doubt, or care
- 3. tightly locked or well protected
- 4. fixed or tied firmly in position
- 5. able to be relied on: *secure profits*

Verb

- [-curing, -cured]
- 1. to obtain: *to secure a change in German policy*
- 2. to make or become free from danger or fear
- 3. to make safe from loss, theft, or attack
- 4. to attach; make fast or firm
- 5. to guarantee (payment of a loan) by giving something as security [Latin *securus* free from care]

securely *adv*

Collins Essential English Dictionary 2nd Edition 2006 © HarperCollins Publishers 2004, 2006

In an operational context, to gain possession of a position or terrain feature, with or without force, and to make such disposition as will prevent, as far as possible, its destruction or loss by enemy action. See also denial measure.

Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms. US Department of Defense 2005.

Thesaurus

Legend: |Synonyms|Related Words|Antonyms

Verb 1. secure - get by special effort; "He procured extra cigarettes even though they were rationed"

|procure

|suborn - procure (false testimony or perjury)

|obtain - come into possession of; "How did you obtain the visa?"

|copyright - secure a copyright on a written work; "did you copyright your manuscript?"


|patent - obtain a patent for; "Should I patent this invention?"

|enlist, engage - hire for work or assistance;



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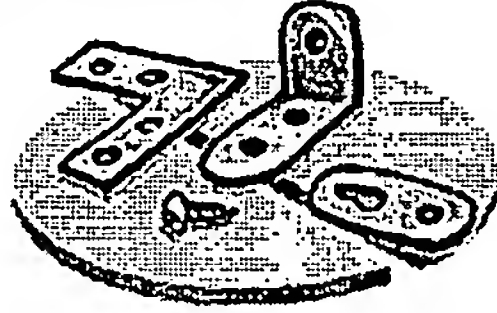


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"engage aid, help, services, or support"

2. **secure** - cause to be firmly attached; "fasten the lock onto the door"; "she fixed her gaze on the man"



fasten, fix

strap - secure (a sprained joint) with a strap

tie, bind - fasten or secure with a rope, string, or cord; "They tied their victim to the chair"

rig - connect or secure to; "They rigged the bomb to the ignition"

bitt - secure with a bitt; "bitt the ship line"

latch - fasten with a latch; "latch the door"

garter - fasten with or as if with a garter

chain - fasten or secure with chains; "Chain the chairs together"

cable - fasten with a cable; "cable trees"

picket - fasten with a picket; "picket the goat"

rope up - attach to one another, for safety; "The mountaineers roped up when they started the final ascent"

attach - cause to be attached

cinch, girth - tie a cinch around; "cinch horses"

bandage, bind - wrap around with something so as to cover or enclose

cramp - secure with a cramp; "cramp the wood"

cleat - secure on a cleat; "cleat a line"

cast anchor, drop anchor, anchor - secure a vessel with an anchor; "We anchored at Baltimore"

anchor, ground - fix firmly and stably; "anchor the lamppost in concrete"

moor - secure with cables or ropes; "moor the boat"

moor, berth, tie up - secure in or as if in a berth or dock; "tie up the boat"

spike - secure with spikes

sew, sew together, stitch, run up - fasten by sewing; do needlework

crank - fasten with a crank

noose - secure with a noose

chock - secure with chocks

brad - fasten with brads

bight - fasten with a bight

belay - fasten a boat to a bitt, pin, or cleat

belay - turn a rope round an object or person in order to secure it or him

bar - secure with, or as if with, bars; "He barred the door"

clamp - fasten or fix with a clamp; "clamp the chair together until the glue has hardened"

velcro - fasten with Velcro; "velcro the belt"

stay - fasten with stays

clinch - flatten the ends (of nails and rivets); "the nails were clinched"

clinch - secure or fasten by flattening the ends of nails or bolts; "The girder was clinched into the wall"

lock - fasten with a lock; "lock the bike to the fence"

lock up - secure by locking; "lock up the house before you go on vacation"

hasp - secure or lock with a hasp

zip, zip up, zipper - close with a zipper; "Zip up your jacket--it's cold"

tack - fasten with tacks; "tack the notice on the board"

string - string together; tie or fasten with a string; "string the package"

hook - fasten with a hook

belt - fasten with a belt; "belt your trousers"

cement - bind or join with or as if with cement

grout - bind with grout; "grout the bathtub"

staple - secure or fasten with a staple or staples; "staple the papers together"

rivet - fasten with a rivet or rivets

button - fasten with buttons; "button the dress"

pin - attach or fasten with pins or as if with pins; "pin the needle to the shirt". "pin the blame on the innocent man"

hang, hang up - cause to be hanging or suspended; "Hang that picture on the wall"

hang - place in position as by a hinge so as to allow free movement in one direction; "hang a door"

deposit, stick, wedge, lodge - put, fix, force, or implant; "lodge a bullet in the table"; "stick your thumb in the crack"

entrench, intrench - fix firmly or securely

buckle, clasp - fasten with a buckle or buckles

brooch, clasp - fasten with or as if with a brooch

stake - tie or fasten to a stake; "stake your goat"

3. **secure** - assure payment of

guarantee, vouch - give surety or assume responsibility; "I vouch for the quality of my products"

certify - guarantee payment on; of checks

4. **secure** - make certain of; "This nest egg will ensure a nice retirement for us"; "Preparation will guarantee success!"

assure, ensure, guarantee, insure

guarantee, vouch - give surety or assume responsibility; "I vouch for the quality of my products"

doom - make certain of the failure or destruction of; "This decision will doom me to lose my position"

make - assure the success of; "A good review by this critic will make your play!"

5. **secure** - fill or close tightly with or as if with a plug; "plug the hole"; "stop up the leak"

plug, stop up

stopper, stopple - close or secure with or as if with a stopper; "She stoppered the wine bottle"; "The mothers stoppered their babies' mouths with pacifiers"

tampon - plug with a tampon

fill up, close - fill or stop up; "Can you close the cracks with caulking?"

chink - fill the chinks of, as with caulking

cork, cork up - close a bottle with a cork

6. **secure** - furnish with battens; "batten ships"

batten, batten down

beef up, fortify, strengthen - make strong or stronger; "This exercise will strengthen your upper body"; "strengthen the relations between the two countries"

- Adj. 1. **secure** - free from fear or doubt; easy in mind; "he was secure that nothing will be held against him"

unafraid, untroubled

insecure - lacking self-confidence or assurance; "an insecure person lacking mental stability"

2. **secure** - free from danger or risk; "secure from harm"; "his fortune was secure"; "made a secure place for himself in his field"

protected - kept safe or defended from danger or injury or loss; "the most protected spot I could find"

safe - free from danger or the risk of harm; "a safe trip"; "you will be safe here"; "a safe place"; "a safe bet"

invulnerable - immune to attack; impregnable; "gunners raked the beach from invulnerable positions on the cliffs"

unsafe, insecure - lacking in security or safety; "his fortune was increasingly insecure"; "an insecure future"

3. **secure** - not likely to fail or give way; "the lock was secure"; "a secure foundation"; "a secure hold on her wrist"

fixed - securely placed or fastened or set; "a fixed piece of wood"; "a fixed resistor"

insecure - not firm or firmly fixed; likely to fail or give way; "the hinge is insecure"

4. **secure** - immune to attack; incapable of being tampered with; "an impregnable fortress"; "fortifications that made the frontier inviolable"; "a secure telephone connection"



impregnable, unassailable, unattackable,
inviolable, strong
invulnerable - immune to attack; impregnable;
"gunners raked the beach from invulnerable
positions on the cliffs"
5. **secure** - financially sound; "a good investment";
"a secure investment"
dependable, safe, good
sound - financially secure and safe; "sound
investments"; "a sound economy"

Based on WordNet 3.0, Farlex clipart collection. © 2003-2008 Princeton University, Farlex Inc.

secure

- verb 1. OBTAIN, get, acquire, land (*informal*) score (*slang*) gain, pick up, get hold of, come by, procure, make sure of, win possession of << OPPOSITE lose
- verb 2. ATTACH, stick, fix, bind, pin, lash, glue, fasten, rivet << OPPOSITE detach
- verb 3. GUARANTEE, insure, ensure, assure << OPPOSITE endanger
- adjective 4. SAFE, protected, shielded, sheltered, immune, unassailable, impregnable << OPPOSITE unprotected
- adjective 5. FAST, firm, fixed, tight, stable, steady, fortified, fastened, dependable, immovable << OPPOSITE insecure
- adjective 6. RELIABLE, definite, solid, absolute, conclusive, in the bag (*informal*)
- adjective 7. CONFIDENT, sure, easy, certain, assured, reassured << OPPOSITE uneasy

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Translations

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secure

adj secure [si'kjʊə]

- 1 (often with *against* or *from*) safe; free from danger, loss etc *Is your house secure against burglary?; He went on holiday, secure in the knowledge that he had done well in the exam.*
- 2 firm, fastened, or fixed *Is that door secure?*
- 3 definite; not likely to be lost *She has had a secure offer of a job; He has a secure job.*

v

- 1 (with *against* or *from* (something bad)) to guarantee or make safe *Keep your jewellery in the bank to secure it against theft.*
- 2 to fasten or make firm *He secured the boat with a*

<u>Secundation</u> <u>secundigravida</u> <u>Secundine</u> <u>secundines</u> <u>Secundo-geniture</u> <u>Securable</u> secure <u>Secure arms</u> <u>secured bond</u> <u>secured creditor</u> <u>securely</u> <u>Securement</u> <u>Secureness</u> <u>Securer</u>	<u>Secundrabad</u> <u>Secundrabad</u> <u>Express</u> <u>Secundum Legem</u> <u>Secundum</u> <u>Naturam</u> <u>Secundum</u> <u>naturam est</u> <u>Secundum quid</u> <u>Secundum</u> <u>Regulam</u> <u>Secundus</u> <u>Secundus Heres</u> <u>Secundus of Asti</u> <u>Secundus of Non</u> <u>Secundus of</u> <u>Ptolemais</u> <u>Secundus of Trent</u> <u>Secundus,</u> <u>Johannes</u> <u>Secunia</u>	<u>securable</u> <u>securable</u> <u>securable</u> <u>Securable Remote</u> <u>Control Unit</u> <u>Securacom</u> <u>SecurDisc</u> secure <u>Secure Access</u> <u>and Authentication</u> <u>Module</u> <u>Secure Access</u> <u>Facility for</u> <u>Transactions</u> <u>Secure Access</u> <u>Federal/State</u> <u>Exchange</u> <u>Secure Access</u> <u>For Everyone</u> <u>Secure Access</u> <u>For Everyone</u> <u>Secure Access</u> <u>Key</u> <u>Secure Access</u> <u>Module</u> <u>Secure Access</u> <u>Module</u>	<u>Secure Access to</u> <u>University Restricted</u> <u>Network</u> <u>Secure Access</u> <u>Unit</u> <u>Secure Access</u> <u>Wrapper</u> <u>Secure Acoustic</u> <u>Data Relay</u> <u>Secure Acoustic</u> <u>Data Relay System</u> <u>Secure Active</u> <u>Network</u> <u>Environment</u> <u>Secure Ad-Hoc on</u> <u>Demand Distance</u> <u>Vector</u> <u>Secure Address</u> <u>Foundation</u> <u>Extensions</u> <u>secure against</u> <u>Secure</u> <u>Agreement Protocol</u> <u>secure Air Force</u> <u>weather information</u> <u>network</u> <u>Secure America</u> <u>and Orderly</u> <u>Immigration Act</u> <u>Secure America</u> <u>and Orderly</u> <u>Immigration Act (S.</u> <u>1033)</u> <u>Secure America</u> <u>and Orderly</u> <u>Immigration Act of</u> <u>2005</u> <u>secure analyst file</u> <u>environment</u>
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